

English Tombs and Monuments in Bencoolen.

BY C. J. BROOKS.
(With three plates).

Bencoolen, as an early English settlement in the East, may lay claim to more than passing interest from the historian of English pioneer colonisation, and to the naturalist, as a centre where early researches were made, in a country of which the fauna and flora are but still incompletely known, and whose vast forests are yet unexplored.

It was in connection with the latter that the writer's attention was drawn to the old English tombs in Bencoolen while seeking the burial place of Joseph Arnold, the discoverer of the Rafflesia, and that of William Jack, the author of *Malayan Miscellanies*, both were presumably buried there¹. Neither can be located, possibly they are among the majority whose tombs bear no inscription, together with Sir T. S. Raffles' son and Capt. Auber, both mentioned in Jack's letters to Wallich as dying during this period in Bencoolen², while that of Jn. Lancaster, Surgeon³, is in evidence.

They may however rest in some forgotten spot, perhaps adjoining the old Residency, where ever it was, for interments were not confined to the burial ground, although in existence at the time, and the earliest inscribed grave bears the date 1775, but are somewhat scattered at least those of the governing class. For instance Capt. Hamilton's tomb is even now on the outskirts of the town while others are in Fort Marlboro, and the site of Governor Watts' is unknown.

In this record it has been assumed that old tombs bearing no inscription belong to the period under consideration, at the same time it must be admitted there is little justification for doing so; in either case it is difficult to understand why so many tombs bear no inscription, 46 in a total of 73. In nearly every instance a recess exists for the insertion of a tablet, possibly some have been stolen, but in many cases the sides are so smooth that it is unlikely one was ever inserted.

Magnificent casuarinas and crotons give a picturesque effect, and lend a solemn shade during the hot hours of the day. The tombs are well tended as far as the removal of vegetation and whitewashing is concerned, many show large cracks in the masonry probably

1	Jack's letters to Wallich, vide introduction	This Journal No. 73
2	" " " " " " " " " " " "	page 147 and 239
3	" " " " " " " " " " " "	" 234
	" " " " " " " " " " " "	" 237

due to earthquake. It is still the burial place of Benkoelen, but in the accompanying plan only the locations of the English tombs are indicated, with a few exceptions which are not mentioned in the text.

The author's thanks are due to Mr. Westenek, the Resident of Benkoelen, Mr. van den Horst, and Mr. P. Jansen, T. Pzn., for assistance in compiling these notes.

TOMBS IN FORT MARLBOROUGH.

To the right on entering the barbican and below the barbette, are three altar tombs, side by side, each surmounted by a massive slate slab. The inscriptions are now illegible with the exception of the names and a few words in No. 1 and 2, and entirely in the case of No. 3.

No. 1 (Near the barbette)

Charles Murray Esq.

Assist. Residt. Ft. Marlboro., 1807.

2 Thomas Parr Esq.

The inscriptions are long and both terminate with the name of Lord Minto. In one case it seems that it was erected to his order, this would then follow for the other.

THE MONUMENT TO RESIDENT PARR.

This handsome monument, a well proportioned domed pavilion, stands by itself in a small grass square in the busiest part of the town, at the top of the main Pasar adjoining the recreation ground.

There is no inscription indicating the purpose for which it was erected, and at the present time the inhabitants both European and Native are almost entirely ignorant of its origin.

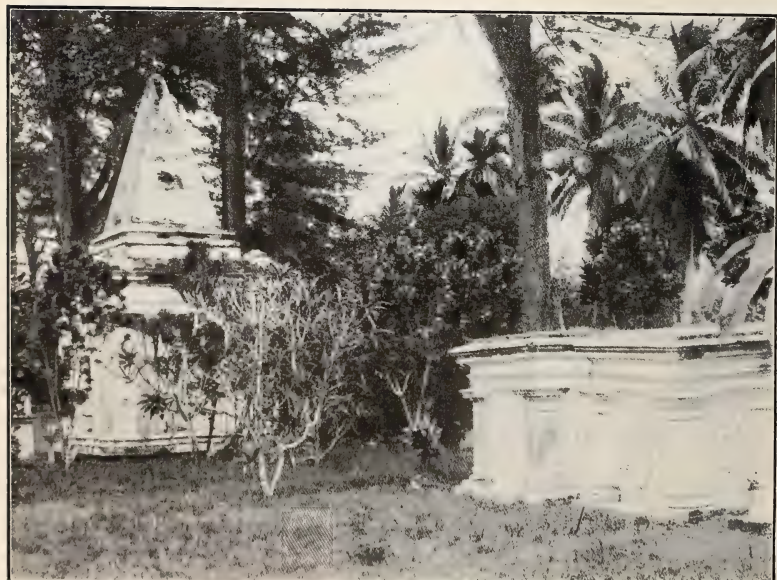
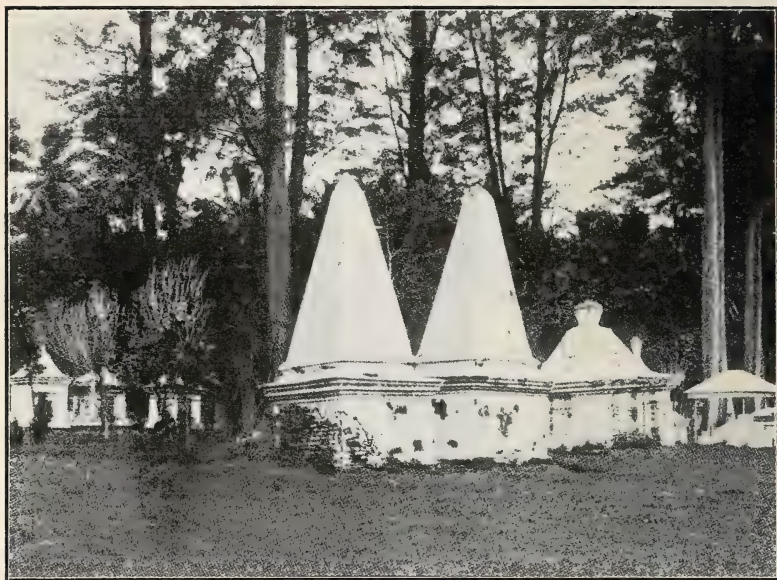
Resident Parr was murdered by the natives in 1805.

The condition of affairs preceding the tragedy, and later the revenge taken by the Government on the natives is described in Nahuy's Letters, and Lady Raffles's Memoir, (vide, *Onze Indische Financien*, by E. de Waal, p. 8 & 9.) of which the following is a brief summary:—

The business of the East India Company was essentially in pepper, and to insure the largest profits against the lowest prices only elementary agreements were made with the head natives.

The Governor and other functionaries were allowed to trade on their own account, especially in the importation of opium and piece goods to Java.

The total trade of the port at this time was worth about £100,000 per annum, while the Company's trade in pepper was declining, they—the Company—decided to economise.



OLD BRITISH TOMBS IN BENCOOLEN.

In 1801 under the Governor-General Lord Wellesley a commissioner was sent from the High Court of Bengal to Bencoolen with authority to suspend the Governor and his two councillors and reduce the number of functionaries, prohibit private trading, and reduce the Settlement to a dependency of Bengal.

It appears that the commission was executed in a tactless manner. The garrison of Fort Marlboro was assembled in arms and the commission read in public.

A considerable outcry resulted from this insult, some of the dismissed received compensation, while others were dismissed without pay and being bound to the place became impoverished. These conditions caused great discontent which was increased among the natives by the action of Resident Parr, who was sent from Bengal to succeed the late Governor.

He proceeded to reform the native administration of justice without consulting the native chiefs, assuming a despotic power over them. To the cultivation of pepper he added coffee and made both compulsory.

Moreover being used in his former position in Bengal to absolute obedience he personally insulted many of the most important natives.

Before long a conspiracy against his life was deliberated, this was known but Parr although warned would pay no attention.

On a determined night his house at Mt. Felix—some three miles south of the Fort—was attacked by a band of natives who overpowered the guard, then entered the room where Parr lay ill and decapitated him, in an attempt to defend him his wife and secretary Murray were wounded, but no attempt was made on their lives nor on the lives of other inhabitants of Bencoolen.

The attack was a personal matter.

The action of the Government relative to this is described in Lady Raffles's Memoir:—

The measures that followed were of a doubtful cast.

As soon as it was discovered that the designs of the people were confined to the assassination, and not directed against the settlement generally, search was made for the perpetrators of the act. Rewards were offered for the apprehension, alive or dead, of the assassins.

It was thought unsafe to touch the chiefs. Several of the people were blown from the mouths of guns. As the danger diminished, the spirit of indignation and revenge seemed to have increased. An order was given to burn and destroy every village within a certain distance, and the work of de-

vastation was carried on as if it were intended to place the future security of the settlement in surrounding it with a desert. The fruit-trees, venerable by their age, that surround a Malay village, are the protecting deities of the place, and are regarded with reverence and respect; Their destruction is looked upon as little less than sacrilege; Yet the axe was laid to their roots, and what ever could shelter or protection was levelled with the ground, and the whole population of the suspected villages turned loose upon the country.

To retain this in the memory of the people a handsome monument was erected by the natives to the order of the Government, in honor of Parr.

It serves now as an ornament to the town, and a very suitable shelter to President Watts tombstone, the original site of this stone is now unknown. It leans against the inner wall, a massive granite slab, artistically inscribed as follows:—

Richard Watts Esq.

Sometime of Council for the Rt. Honble Compas Affairs
in Fort St. George.

And in the year 1699 came over Deputy Governor of this Place.

And in about three years after made by Commission from the
Company the first President of this Coast.

In which station he departed this life December 17, 1705.

And in the 44 year of his age.

THE OBELISK TO CAPT. HAMILTON.

This stands in the junction of three roads, some little distance south of the town, and at the end of the Pasar Baroe Road.

A slate tablet bears the following inscription:—

Underneath this obelisk are interred the Remains of Capt.
Robert Hamilton.

Who died on the 15th Dec., 1793. At the age of 38 years.

In command of the troops and second member of the Govern-
ment.

THE CEMETERY, BENCOOLEN.

The numbers are those recorded in the Government register and plan, only those of English or early origin are mentioned in this record; All have monuments.

Division 1.

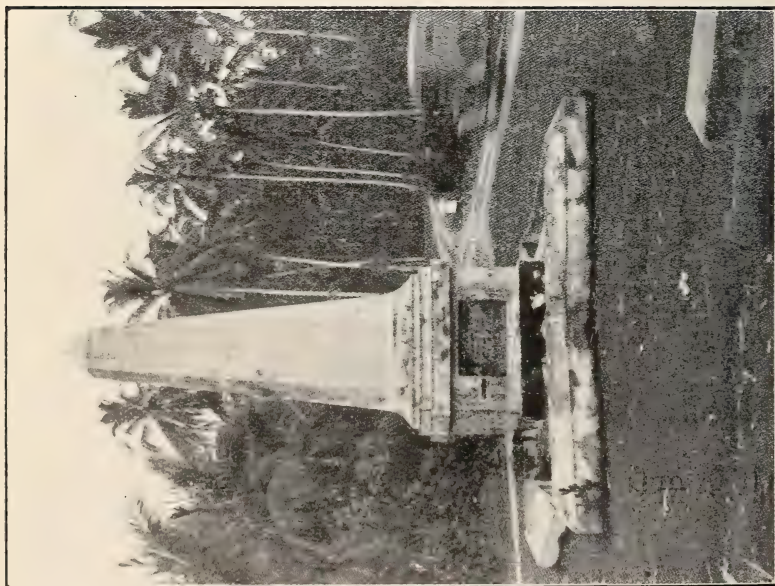
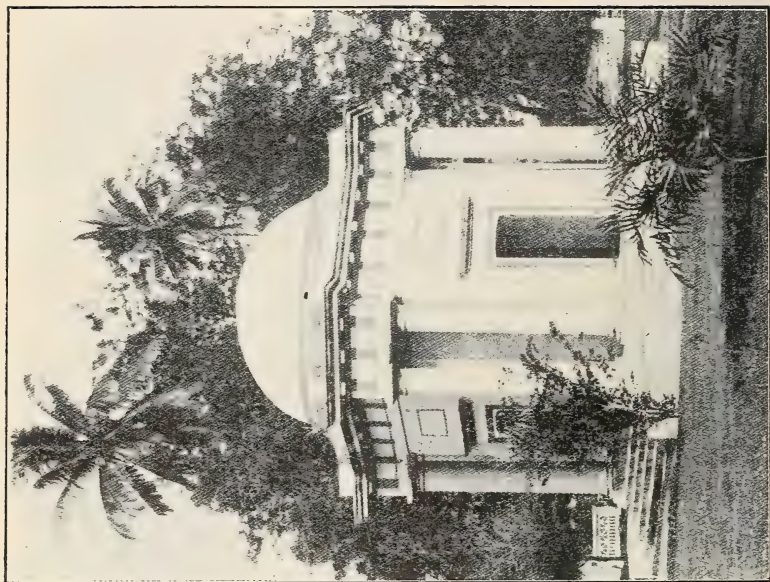
No.

12 Majr. Chas. Porteous

2nd Br. 20th Regt. B. N. I.

8 April 1816, Age 39

(A fine monument)



OLD BRITISH TOMBS IN BENCOCLEN.

The moral qualities which graced his mind,
 Proved him an ornament to human kind,
 Society his manners so adorned
 He lived respected, died sincerely mourned.
 Oh pass not by, stop youthful pilgrim here,
 Read this and on his ashes drop a tear.

(A fine monument)

57 Mr. Thos. Whittenberry
 28th Aug. 1802, Age 18 years

58 Ed. Atkins Esq.
 28th March 1812, Age 46

Division 2.

No.

1 A large square tomb with side tablets,
 Ann. H. Johnstone
 Christened 17th April, 1790 Died June.

Wm. Cox
 1802-1804

Ph. Cox
 May 1804 July 1804

3 No inscription.

4 T. W. Gibson
 1862, Age 56

5 No inscription.

6 " "

7 " "

12 " "

to " "

27 " "

31 " "

38 Ed. Crisp
 Writer in the service of the E. I. Company.
 24 Dec. 1796

53 Capt. Thos. C. Tapson
 15 July 1816, Age 52

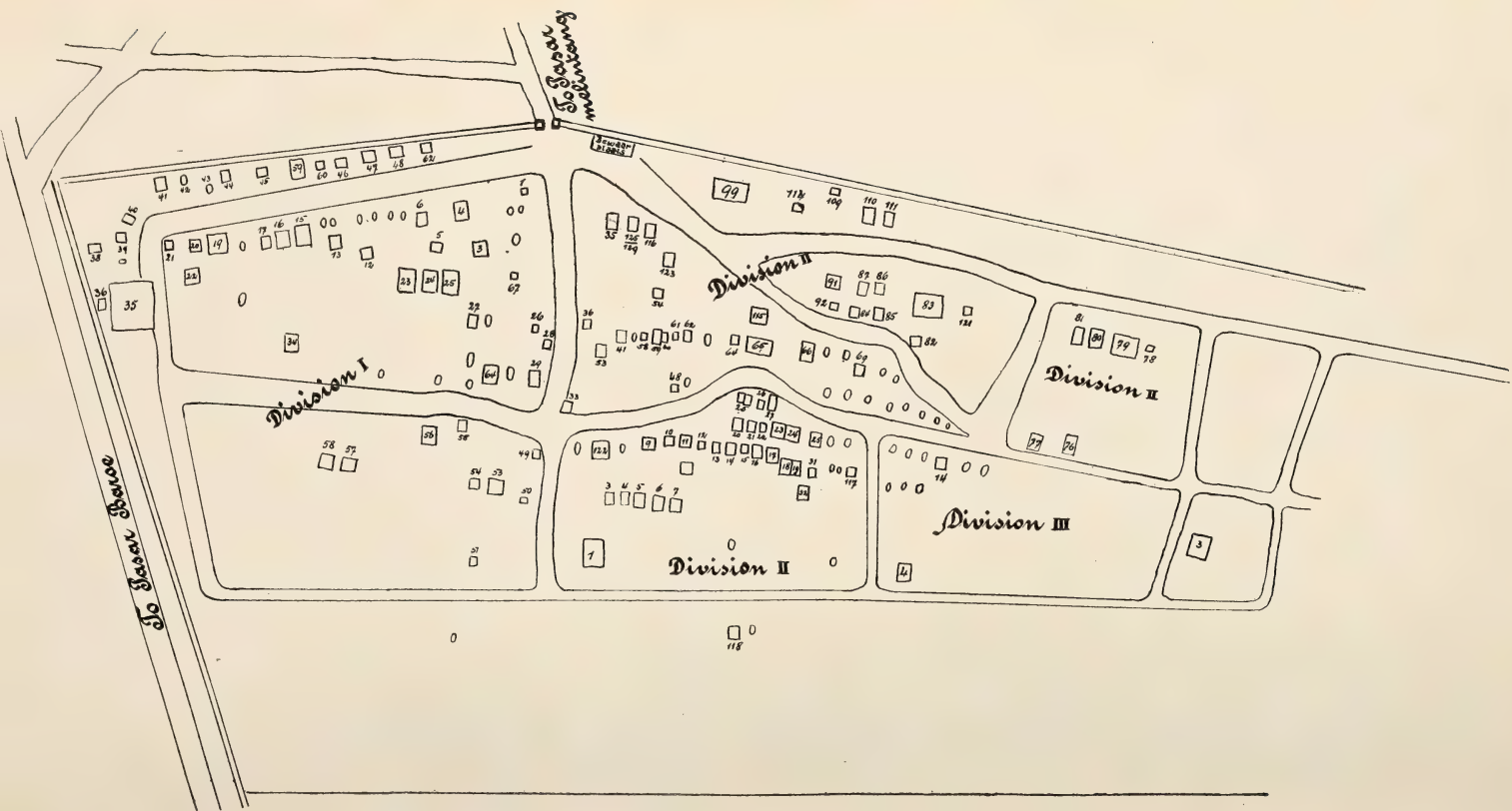
This humble monument was erected to his memory
 by his much afflicted friend Nonah Jessmina.

54 Miss Frances Maclane
 18 Oct. 1858, Age 58

59 No inscription. Old tombs of various types.

60 " "

61 " "



The Cemetery Bencoolen:
Showing early English tombs:

- 62 No inscription. Old tombs of various types.
 64 " "
 65 " "
 69 " "
 76 " "
 77 " "
 78 " "
 79 " One of the finest monuments in the cemetery.
 80 Capt. Robt. Hall
 Of the Bengal Service
 1820, Age 30
 82 No inscription.
 83 A large monument with side tablets
 Jn. Lancaster
 Assist. Surgeon of the Bengal Establishment
 16th Sept. 1821, Age 33
 Jane Lewis
 Feb. 19 1815, Age 22
 Wm. Baillie
 Aug. 1810, Age 10 days
 Mrs. M. Baillie
 3rd May 1815, Age 25
 Erected by her brothers H. R. and W. T. Lewis
 86 No inscription.
 91 Mary Anne, Wife of W. R. Jennings Esq.
 22nd April 1818
 99 No inscription. (A very large monument)
 109 Jane, Wife of P. Devine
 Sub-conductor of ordinance at Fort Marlboro'
 9th March 1825, Age 33
 She was possessed of the virtues which adorn the
 sex. And whose loss will ever be lamented by an affectionate husband.
 125/9 No inscription.
- Division 3.*
- No.
 3 Mary Percival, Wife of Capt. R. K. Smith
 Of the Ship 'Cynthia' of New York
 11th April 1848.

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		Division	Number
Atkins, Ed.	Cemetery	1	58
Baillie, Wm.	"	2	83
Baillie, Mrs. M.	"	2	83
Bogle, J. V. L. E.	"	1	24
Bogle, Robt.	"	1	23
Cox, Wm.	"	2	1
Cox, Ph.	"	2	1
Crisp, Ed.	"	2	38
Devine, Jane	"	2	109
Douston, Stokeham	"	1	50
Gibson, T. W.	"	2	4
Hall, Capt. Robt.	"	2	80
Hamilton, Capt. Robt.	The obelisk		
Hay, Harriet A.	Cemetery	1	25
Holloway, Wm.	"	1	56
Inglis, Fransis	"	2	1
Jennings, Mary Anne	"	2	91
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Lewis, Jane	"	2	83
Maclane, Miss Frances	"	2	54
Monteath, Alex. Surgeon	"	1	34
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Parr, Thomas	"		
Porteous, Majr. Chas.	Cemetery	1	12
Ramus, Ch. R.	"	1	28
Smith, Mary Percival	"	3	3
Sprentels, M. B.	"	1	51
Tapson, Capt. Thos. C.	"	2	53
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